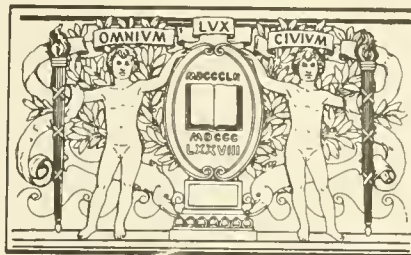


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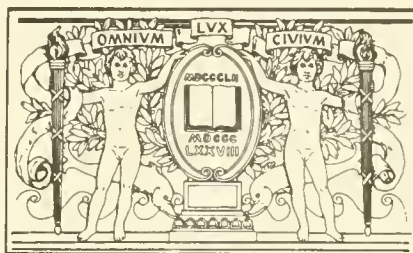


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After careful review of the alternatives proposed for the Third Harbor Tunnel and Central Artery, the Boston Redevelopment Authority supports Alternative 5A Modified for further development. Alternative 5A Modified offers reasonable solutions to three major transportation problems in the City: inadequate seaport access for commercial traffic in South Boston and the limited capacity of cross harbor traffic routes and the Central Artery.

The BRA wants to insure first, that the City, its citizenry and interest groups participate in all aspects of project planning and that the final project design respond to community needs and other city development plans. For that reason, the concept of joint development which is proposed in the supplementary DEIS/EIR for the depressed Artery should be extended to the affected areas of North Station, Fort Point Channel, and South Boston. The BRA should have a strong role in that process.

Second, as the statutory planning and development agency, the BRA should be lead agency in guiding development that will occur after the project is constructed, along the project's corridor and with the air rights development. The BRA should continue to perform its current functions in the City; establishing development guidelines, selecting developers, and guiding the development process.


Third, the BRA's support for Alternative 5A Modified is contingent upon careful control of its construction. Today Boston's downtown is an attractive place to live, work, and invest, and it is important to maintain its appeal during the estimated twelve-year construction period. The process of depressing the Artery could seriously disrupt traffic downtown and diminish the economic viability, the development potential, and the quality of life in Boston's core. Predicting the extent of construction impacts is difficult. Nonetheless, a system for mitigating and responding to them (similar to that of the Red Line and Southwest Corridor projects) can and should be clearly defined prior to construction.

Fourth, the BRA is particularly concerned about the long-term visual and environmental impacts of some aspects of Alternative 5A Modified. The proposed location of the north-bound artery tunnel within Fort Point Channel would adversely affect the aesthetic and historic qualities of the area, diminish its development potential and its value as a natural water resource. Alignment of Dorchester Avenue within the Channel would intensify these adverse impacts. The BRA suggests that the alternative solutions be found.

Fifth, the BRA is concerned about the impacts of Alternative 5A Modified on the North Station Urban Renewal Project Area. The plan for depressing the Central Artery not only ignores the problems that currently exist there, such as the elevated Storrow Drive connection, but would add tunnels and ramps at the edge of the Charles River and would occupy an excessive amount of land suitable for other uses. Other alternatives should be explored, including the DPW's Alternative Alignment #1 and the solution proposed in the North Station Urban Renewal Plan. One of the major features of the project is its proximity to the Charles River and

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the beginning of the Inner Harbor. The North Station is strategically located for linking the harbor waterfront with

the Charles River Esplanade. Any plan for this area should maximize the interface between water and land uses and facilitate pedestrian linkages between the downtown waterfront and the Esplanade. The Central Artery proposal reduces the quality of the water environment as a result of the proposed Charles River bridges and the Storrow Drive connector. This river section is a pleasant experience made more interesting by the coming and going of boats through the locks. Although the existing bridge passes through this space it is less intrusive than the proposed bridges because it is high off the water and so close to the dam that it becomes part of the eastern boundary of this water space. The proposed bridges will destroy the attractiveness of the adjacent land. 

Depressing the Central Artery affords the opportunity to modify the highway network to support the City's plans for North Station. It is an opportunity which should not be lost.

